



Town of Groton, Connecticut

Meeting Agenda

45 Fort Hill Road
Groton, CT 06340-4394
Town Clerk 860-441-6640
Town Manager 860-441-6630

RTM Finance Committee

Chairman Keith Hedrick, Representatives Joe Baril, Warren Cooper, Luanne DeMatto, Patrice Granatosky, Kristen Powers, Jack Sebastian and Jennifer Smuts

Monday, November 01, 2010

6:30 PM

Town Hall Annex-Comm Rm 2

Special Meeting

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. ROLL CALL**
- 3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
- 4. NEW BUSINESS**

2010-0195 Groton Long Point Police Budget - Request for Supplemental Appropriation

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A TRANSFER FROM CONTINGENCY FOR THE GROTON LONG POINT POLICE DEPARTMENT

WHEREAS, during its deliberations on the FYE 2011 budget the Representative Town Meeting voted to reduce Groton Long Point's police budget by \$208,000, and

WHEREAS, the Groton Long Point Board subsequently voted to reduce its public safety budget by \$80,000 and pay the remaining \$128,000 through an increase in the district's mill rate, and

WHEREAS, prior to this decision, the president of the Groton Long Point Board had requested supplemental funding from the Town of Groton in the amount of \$128,000, and

WHEREAS, the Town Council has authorized a Town-wide police assessment in an effort to bring Groton Long Point, City of Groton, and Town of Groton representatives to the table to discuss police services, and

WHEREAS, the Town Council felt that Groton Long Point's request for supplemental funding should be addressed separately from the Town-wide police assessment, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that a transfer of \$128,000 be made from the FYE 2011 General Fund's Contingency account (#10741-5499) to Groton Long Point's police account (#10910-5230).

Refer to RTM.

Legislative History

9/21/2010	Mayor	Referred	Town Council Committee of the W
9/28/2010	Town Council Committee of the Whole	Recommended for a Resolution	

The Town Manager noted the reductions to the Groton Long Point police budget during FYE 2011 budget deliberations by the Town Council and RTM. Bob Congdon, president of the Groton Long Point Association, was present to address the Council.

Mr. Congdon noted that Groton Long Point pays its fair share of taxes and receives very few services. Groton Long Point's budget was submitted with a 0% increase. He feels that the RTM's reduction was a mistake.

Councilor Sheets asked if the Town Manager will submit a request for Groton Long Point's police budget in the

FYE 2012 budget. The Town Manager stated that if a figure is submitted by Groton Long Point, he is obligated to include it in his budget.

Councilor O'Beirne feels this is an issue of fairness and Groton Long Point was treated differently than the City of Groton. He feels the Town Council should reconsider.

9/28/2010 Town Council Committee of Motion
the Whole

to make a \$128,000 supplemental appropriation for the Groton Long Point police budget.

Councilor Monteiro echoed the fairness issue. She noted a public perception that the Town is paying for extra services in Groton Long Point. The Town only pays what it would cost the Town to provide the service. Councilor Watson agreed and mentioned that Groton Long Point and the City agreed during budget deliberations to participate in a Police Assessment. Mr. Congdon explained that the Groton Long Point district mill rate was raised to cover the budget shortfall. Councilor Flax feels that a fair process has already taken place and it is not right to try to overturn the RTM's action. Councilors Johnson and Sheets and Mayor Streeter expressed support for the motion. Mayor Streeter noted that the supplemental appropriation will have to go to the RTM for approval. Councilor Peruzzotti expressed concern with expending contingency funds so early in the fiscal year when the future is unknown. The decision could be made later in the fiscal year. Mr. Congdon noted the supplemental appropriation request is also "part of the process." Councilor Kolnaski stated she did not agree with the RTM's action, but they will have another chance to consider this.

Councilor Watson asked how the funds will be used since residents are already being taxed. Mr. Congdon indicated the funds will go back in the police budget

10/5/2010 Town Council Deleted from Referral List -
Action to be taken

10/5/2010 Town Council Adopted as Amended and Representative Town Meeting
Referred

Councilor O'Beirne stated that there has been some confusion, but the source of money for this resolution should either be a supplemental appropriation from the General Fund balance or a transfer from the Contingency account.

Councilor Peruzzotti will be voting against this resolution, as she believes that this matter does not need to be addressed immediately.

Councilor Johnson stated that it is a matter of fairness.

The Town Manager explained the difference between the General Fund balance and Contingency and noted that the current General Fund balance is 7.2%, which is below the 7.5% guideline that the Council adopted. The Town Manager's suggestion is to utilize the Contingency Fund. Regardless of the funding source, if adopted, this item will proceed to the RTM.

Councilor Sheets noted that the cut to Groton Long Point's Police Department budget was done without planning or preparation, and stated that this is a matter of principle.

Councilor Flax will be voting against this resolution because he believes that the political process was followed. He is afraid that passing this resolution will open a "can of worms" where budgetary matters are concerned.

Councilor Monteiro stated that she would agree with Councilor Flax if the RTM was removed from the process altogether, but, if passed, this resolution will be referred to the RTM.

In answer to a query, the Town Manager replied that he does not think bond ratings will be affected if the General Fund is used.

Councilor Johnson remarked that Groton Long Point residents are taxpayers and the Town Police do not patrol there. He believes that this appropriation is equivalent to the cost for the Town to police that area.

Mayor Streeter stated that this resolution does not usurp the authority of the RTM because, if passed, the resolution will be referred to the RTM. He is, however, disappointed that the town-wide police assessment was not completed before this resolution came to a vote.

MOTION TO AMEND to replace the entire resolution with a new one previously prepared by the Town Manager that stipulates the funding source as a transfer from the General Fund's Contingency account was made by Councilor O'Beirne, seconded by Councilor Sheets.

VOTE on Motion to Amend passed 6 In Favor, 2 Opposed (Opposed: Councilors Flax and Peruzzotti).

10/13/2010 Representative Town Meeting Referred RTM Finance Committee

Rep. Pasqualini raised a "Point of Order" stating that he believes the actions of the Town Council are improper and constitute a violation of the Town Charter. He noted that the action of the RTM was very clear during budget deliberations and that this item was voted on twice. He feels that the use of Contingency Funds are for expenses that are not anticipated during the budget process or for unforeseen events. He provided examples such as severe winter weather and hurricanes. He believes that this item should not be referred to an RTM committee, nor any action taken until a Town Attorney opinion can be obtained to review the intent and interpretation of the Charter as it pertains to the budget process, and proper uses of the Contingency Fund.

Moderator Power clarified that a "Point of Order" is a non-debatable motion, and not open for discussion. He noted that the individual raising the "Point of Order" is entitled to state his reason and then the Moderator can make a decision. He stated that he agreed with the points made by Rep. Pasqualini but that procedurally the "Point of Order" is not a valid motion. He reiterated that he is referring this to the RTM Finance Committee and it will be on the November meeting agenda.

5. Consideration of Committee Referral Items as per Referral List

6. ADJOURNMENT

For the committee to meet, we need a quorum. Please let the clerk's office (441-6643) know ASAP if you will not be able to attend this meeting.